

COMBINING NARROWBAND APPLICATIONS WITH BROADBAND TRANSPORT

ABSTRACT

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The combination of narrowband applications with broadband transport may be enabled by implementing a hybrid switch capable of operating as a narrowband switch, a broadband switch, and/or a combination narrowband/broadband switch. The hybrid switch may be initially installed/activated as a narrowband switch in order to operate with a network of all or mostly all narrowband switches. Eventually, the hybrid switch may be used entirely as a broadband switching mechanism when operated with a network of all or mostly all broadband switches. In the interim, the hybrid switch may be operated in a narrowband or a broadband mode on a communication-by-communication basis, for example, depending on the capabilities of the node or nodes to be used in establishing a given communication. The hybrid switch may include both broadband (e.g., ATM) and narrowband (e.g., STM) switching components.